

WYOU LP is a low power public radio station located in Williamsburg Virginia. We have been on air since October of 2004.

We NEED protection from commercial stations overpowering us and forcing us off the air.

We are a community supported radio station and operate commercial free. Visit our web site at www.wyou.fm to get an understanding how LPFM can make a difference in the community. Our broadcast schedule is full of educational and public service announcements. The overpowering station is slated to run a Heavy Metal format and we do not see how this is in the public interest. Please, help us stay on the air.

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Low Power FM Radio: A Real Solution to the Problem of Media Consolidation

Congress Can Support Localism in Media by Supporting Low Power Radio!

The low power FM (LPFM) radio service was adopted by the Federal Communications Commission in January of 2000. The LPFM radio license, which is for non-commercial operation only, is available to high schools, labor unions, churches, towns, and community groups of all kinds. About 200 of these stations, broadcasting at 100 watts or less, and over a radius of just a few miles, are on the air serving communities across the country right now. Many more groups are in the license application process and will be on the air within the next year.

The proposal to create a low power radio service received support from thousands of potential broadcasters, including schools, churches, musicians, engineers and people from all walks of life. The only significant opposition came from powerful and large incumbent broadcasters. In late 2000, because of pressure from existing broadcasters, Congress enacted the "Radio Broadcasting

Preservation Act,” which forced the FCC to adopt exorbitant protection standards for new LPFM stations. As the result of this act, new LPFM stations could not be placed on frequencies that were three channels removed from an existing station – and about 75% of opportunities for new LPFM stations were eliminated. Densely populated areas were particularly affected, leaving only one new low power station available in the top fifty American cities.

However, at the time, Congress also required the FCC to commission an outside organization to conduct field tests to resolve the issue of LPFM's potential for third adjacent channel interference. After three years of waiting, this study, administered by The MITRE Corporation, has just been released. The study not only demonstrates that low power stations cause no significant interference to existing stations, but also recommends that the third channel adjacency restriction be lifted – potentially opening the way for many hundreds of new low power FM radio stations. (See the attached Prometheus Radio Project press release on the MITRE study.)

People around the country are concerned about media consolidation. At a recent Senate Commerce Committee hearing on localism and public interest in the media, witnesses testified to their concerns over what happens when national broadcasting companies control local media outlets. Local news coverage – including coverage of electoral candidates – suffers. Local people and their stories are not sufficiently represented. And, with communities unable to easily comment upon, let alone control the content aired by national broadcasters, concerns about indecent programming are on the rise. Low power FM radio is a concrete way to counter this trend toward media consolidation. LPFM stations are locally owned and operated, and their programming is geared specifically towards the communities they serve. Congress has the opportunity to take action to allow for the expansion of the LPFM service, thus opening up the airwaves to many more communities nationwide. Only Congress can make this happen. Support localism in media: support LPFM radio.

Low power FM has been a success, in the places where it has been allowed to exist. Of the 200 stations that are up and running, a few that have succeeded are:

KOCZ, 103.7 FM: Opelousas, Louisiana: The Southern Development Foundation

In Opelousas, Louisiana, the Southern Development Foundation (SDF) works for school reform, community supported agriculture, and neighborhood economic development. They also host the world's largest traditional Zydeco music festival. The SDF is the first civil rights organization in the United States ever to own its own radio station. They host current affairs talk shows with many major politicians around the state, musical events, and religious programming. Their executive director, John Freeman, says, "We pride ourselves on being part of this democratic project." (See the attached article about KOCZ.)

KRBS, 107.1 FM: Oroville, California: The Bird Street Media Project

This station uses a variety format to highlight the diversity of their small California community. Oroville is a town of 13,000 that has been losing its population to suburban sprawl. Clear Channel recently bought the only radio station in town, dismantled it and moved the license to another town. The organizers see the station as a way to bring people back to the downtown district and a keystone in downtown revitalization plans. Weekly programming includes a call-in legal advice show, two shows dedicated to veterans' issues, radio theater, children's stories, and a wide variety of music.

WEES, 107.9 FM: Ocean City, Maryland: The Edinboro Early School

This station's goal is to recreate the flavor of an early '50s radio station, with family-oriented programming focusing on music of the fifties and early sixties. They have three hours of programming a day for children from 3-5 years old. The station itself is based in The Gold Coast shopping mall, with glass walls on three sides of the broadcast booth so community members can see what's happening in the station. Other programming includes: real estate and finance talk shows; an inter-faith church news bulletin board; field broadcasts

from historical sites; and a music show hosted by a former ABC executive who plays records dating back to the 1920s. The station was built under the leadership of John Gerbracht, a retired electrical engineer who worked for the federal government for 33 years.

Community Radio...For Some:

On the other hand, thousands more groups have had an experience more like the Center for Hmong Arts and Talent in Minneapolis. By the FCC's standards, there were five frequencies that could be used in Minneapolis for low power radio. But as the result of the act of Congress, all five of these frequencies evaporated after the Center applied. Lee Vang had hoped that an LPFM station could serve the large Hmong Community in Minneapolis. "The airwaves belong to all and an LPFM station would give voice to those who have no voice," he says. "We are the only Hmong organization in Minnesota that focuses exclusively on the arts. Radio is extremely important to our community because 95% of Hmong are illiterate." If, as the MITRE study recommends, restrictions are lifted on third channel adjacency for new frequencies, The Center for Hmong Art and Talent – and many other groups like it – could receive licenses to broadcast to their communities.

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Only Congress has the power to bring low power FM radio back.

After many hundreds of thousands of American citizens told their legislators and regulators at the FCC that they supported ownership limits on the corporate media, members of Congress are becoming aware of the need to address media issues. It will take Congressional action to put low power radio back on track, serving America's communities in ways that major, consolidated broadcasters are failing to do.

Low power radio is one of the antidotes to the effects of media concentration that the FCC has unleashed. Nationwide, outrage is growing over the control big broadcasters

have over the news and other programming we see on our TV screens and hear on our radios. This issue is only going to grow in importance to the public. We know there's room on America's airwaves for the Center for Hmong Arts and Talent, and the thousands of other disappointed LPFM applicants around the country. Support their right to be heard. Support localism in media. Support low power FM radio.

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